Sept/Oct 2011

Earlier this summer, the SASO Program Office conducted focus groups and one-on-one interviews with AFS leaders, 14 CFR Part 121, 135, and 145 inspectors, managers and supervisors, as well as Aviation Safety Assistants (ASAs), Aviation Safety Technicians (ASTs), Administrative Officers (AOs), and Operations Research Analysts (ORAs) from across the country. Through these discussions, the SASO Program Office hoped to learn more about each group's interests, perceptions, and knowledge related to the Safety Assurance System, or SAS.

Participants offered input on how they thought SAS would impact the AFS workforce and Certificate Holders, what a successful SAS implementation would look like as well as obstacles to that success, and additional ways for the SASO Program Office to continue to communicate with the AFS workforce about SAS.

Over the coming months, the SASO Program Office will share some of the information we collected from these focus groups and interviews right here in *Grow Your Knowledge*.

What are ASAs, ASTs, AOs, and ORAs Saying about SAS?

In this issue of *Grow Your Knowledge*, we will share some common feedback from our focus groups and interviews with ASAs, ASTs, AOs, and ORAs. Here is what these employees had to say:

SAS's Impact on the AFS Workforce

- The ASAs and ASTs we spoke with hope that SAS will create a steadier workflow and streamlined processes for their job functions across the board, which will make work and communication easier and give each office a consistent, standard operating procedure
- ORA participants believe they will face a learning curve in gaining 14 CFR Part 135/145 responsibilities, as most of their experience is with 14 CFR Part 121

SAS's Impact on Certificate Holders

- ASA and AST participants think that SAS will create a more efficient workflow for Certificate Holders as well as the opportunity for ASAs and ASTs to provide standardized answers to Certificate Holder questions

SAS Success

- ASA and AST focus group participants noted that for SAS to succeed, training is critical because it will give non-inspectors a clearer idea of their job function and how data is generated and collected
- ORAs interviewed believe SAS will be successful if it is a single database that integrates previous systems into one, generates better data than current systems to pinpoint specific high-risk areas, and can adjust inspections based on a Certificate Holder's size and complexity

- This ORA group also said that for SAS to be successful, it should provide the data to make predictions about future events, analyze trends, and build collaboration at a national level
- ASA, AST, ORA, and AO participants acknowledged that SAS's success depends on "top-down" support; they would like to see communications from AFS leaders to the entire workforce demonstrating leadership support of the SAS

SAS Communication Preferences - What and How to Communicate

- The ASAs and ASTs interviewed said that they read *Grow Your Knowledge* and other communication materials, and prefer to receive information via email. However, they want to know more about what they will be doing in the SAS, and how the inspectors they support will be impacted by it
- ORA participants want to know more details about the future of their role; about how the data in SAS will be stored, accessed, and analyzed; and what kinds of reports inspectors and managers will need in the future

The Program Office will continue to solicit feedback from AFS employees. Check out future issues of *Grow Your Knowledge* to learn about what other members of the AFS workforce said about SAS, and for answers to common questions and concerns

New & Noteworthy

Preparing the AFS workforce for the SAS

Do you know how the SASO Program Office is preparing the AFS workforce for the SAS? Download the newest fact sheet from the SASO Library to learn more.

Ask SASO

Are you an ASA, AST, AO, or ORA? Do you share the opinions you just read? Do you have additional feedback? Send us an email and let us know.

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